ment, donations and royalty on the use of farmers' varieties; and

(d) if so, the action taken by Government in that regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) to (d) A decision has been taken to move for enactment of a Plant Variety Protection and Farmers' Rights legislation. It is premature to comment on the final shape of the proposed Bill.

International Price of Urea

1102. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been fall in the International price of urea during the recent months;

(b) if so, the amounts of saving likely to be made by his Ministry on the import of urea as a result thereof;

(c) whether his Ministry propose to set up mobile soil testing vans with the amount due from the above savings; and

(d) if so, the present position in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Since the subject of production and import of urea is handled by the Ministry of Chemicals & Fertilizers, the subsidy on urea is paid form the Demand for Grants of that Ministry. Though the international price of urea has shown a declining trend in recent months, it is not possible to assess the savings likely to accrue in the subsidy bill. The increase in the cost of indigenously manufactured urea, owing to increase in feed-stock prices,has also offset the saving.

(c) and (d) In view of the reply to part (b) above, questions do not arise.

The Dark Weevil Rhizome Pests

1103. SHRI JAGIR SINGH DARD: DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the banana crop is highly and badly affected by the dark weevil rhizome pests;

(b) if so, the plan of Government to control this; and

(c) the steps being taken to eradicate these pests altogether?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) The Government is aware about the dark weevil rhizome pest commonly known as rhizome weevil. It is a major pest of banana in Kerala, Bihar, North-Eastern States, West Bengal, parts of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka.

(b) Indian Council of Agricultural Research is implementing an All Project on Tropical Fruits at three Agricultural Universities viz. Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore and Kerala Agricultural University, Kannara. In addition, ICAR has a National Research Centre on banana at Tiruchirapalli. efforts are being made to develop effective management strategies for control of rhizome weevil through this project and ICAR research centre.

(c) Following recommendations are being popularised by the States for effective control of rhizome weevil on banana:—

(i) Keep the plantation free from weeds which harbour the weevil.

(ii) Healthy suckers should be selected from fields known to be free from all stages of the banana rhizome weevil.